

Alianza para el Turismo Comunitario



USAID
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS
UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

COUNTERPART
INTERNATIONAL



Cooperative Agreement 520-A-00-06-00092
Alianza Para el Turismo Comunitario

USAID | Counterpart International

Quarterly Report, 1st Quarter 2012
October 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011

Submitted January 2012

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I. Executive Summary

During the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012 (October 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011) Counterpart continued implementing activities according to the annual work plan in key regions of the country and covering key topics related to economic development through tourism and handicrafts, biodiversity conservation and enhanced food security for families in the Western Highlands.

Counterpart provided technical assistance through the “Logremos que su empresa ó destino venda más” (Let’s boost your business) program to over 100 SMEs, community organizations and destination organizations in Petén, Verapaces, Sololá, Quetzaltenango and San Marcos. Interventions included design and implementation of promotional and commercialization strategies and actions, formalization of groups as businesses, improvement of hotel and restaurant operations, strengthening of accounting, financial management and reporting capabilities, and development of Christmas season promotional strategies. With Sololá’s Tourism Commission, Counterpart led the process for designing a strategy that will serve to populate the Atitlán destination portal with content, following the recommendations of a consulting practicum carried out by George Washington and Del Valle Universities under support from this program.

Counterpart continued to participate as a member of the 2012 Committee, a voluntary grouping of private, public and academic sector organizations aimed at promoting Guatemala as the epicenter of the 2012 Maya commemoration date and maximizing the potential of the topic for Guatemala’s positioning. One of the main concerns of the Committee was to systematize relevant information about the Maya Calendar and 2012 and disseminate it with tourism sector leaders and opinion leaders in order to consolidate scientific knowledge about the event and provide grounds for appropriate promotion and product development. As part of these efforts, Counterpart is led the implementation of a series of informative workshops about the Maya 2012 commemoration. The workshops under the topic 2012: Archaeology, Astronomy, Epigraphy and Prophecies of the Ancient Maya were developed in two versions: general introductory workshops with duration of four hours, targeted at tourism sector leaders, while detailed workshops with duration of sixteen hours are targeted at tourism guides and practitioners. As part of the preparation for these workshops Counterpart supported the preparation of a manual that serves as a supporting and illustrative document for the workshops. During this quarter thirteen workshops were carried out in Petén, Quetzaltenango, Sololá, Tecpan and Guatemala City with over 300 participants in total. It is noteworthy that two workshops were carried out with personnel from Guatemala’s Tourism Institute (INGUAT), one with personnel from Guatemala’s Ministry of Culture and one with personnel from Tikal National Park. Additional workshops with similar formats have been projected for the next quarter including one for USAID Guatemala staff, one for media and one for tour operators. The courses generated coverage in national media, such as the following articles:

<http://www.s21.com.gt/nacionales/2011/11/12/imparten-curso-profecias-mayas-para-guias>

http://www.prensalibre.com/decision_libre_-_solola/Sector-turismo-alista_0_599340103.html

As part of the collaborative efforts with the 2012 Committee, Counterpart performed an in-depth analysis of 17 proposed sites and parks related to the 2012 commemoration. Based on a set of criteria, ten priority sites and parks were then selected to perform field evaluations. Field evaluations included both an assessment of the conditions of the sites or parks and their environs as well as a complete inventory of complementary services in the surrounding region. The study has been acknowledged as useful and very relevant both by 2012 Committee members and by government officials who immediately began planning processes based on the information provided.

Counterpart supported a series of promotional efforts for the conservation of the Guatemalan Fir (*Abies guatemalensis*) as part of its continuing support to Guatemalan Protected Areas Council (CONAP) in the sustainable management of protected areas and in the implementation of Guatemala’s biodiversity strategy. Counterpart and CONAP hosted a series of concerts by Guatemala’s Symphonic Orchestra in key *Pinabete* forest regions and

markets. The concerts provided an ideal framework to communicate conservation messages on how to look for certified *Pinabete* while contributing to conservation of the species by not buying illegal branches. One concert was held in a key *Pinabete* production and transportation region, Quetzaltenango, with an attendance estimated around 2,500. Three concerts were held in Guatemala City in order to promote awareness in the main market for *Pinabete*: two concerts with a total attendance of over 4,800 people were held at Guatemala's National Theater, while a concert with an attendance of over 3,000 was held in Guatemala City's Main Square. All concerts were preceded by promotional spots and a small documentary detailing the importance of the *Pinabete* and how each individual can contribute to its conservation.

As part of the collaborative effort with Guatemala's Network of Microfinance Institutions (REDIMIF), five credits were issued to entrepreneurs from Solola (3), Totonicapán (1) and San Marcos (1). The businesses from Solola and Totonicapán are specialized in handicrafts and the credits will serve as working capital in order to purchase raw materials and improve commercialization efforts. In San Marcos, the credit will be used to expand the work capital and purchase equipment for a handicrafts workshop. In total, the credits amount US\$27,225.81 (Q. 211,000.00), with the smallest loan being equivalent to US\$645.16 and the largest one to US\$10,580.65. In total, these five enterprises provide 36 full time jobs to 20 indigenous women, 12 indigenous men, and four non-indigenous men.

The results of the 2011 interventions through the sub award with Comunidades de la Tierra for incubation of 3 new rural enterprises became crystalized early in 2012 when the groups started receiving orders for their production and their incomes increased significantly. Income per person for group Vida y Esperanza, San Cristóbal, Totonicapán, formed by 21 persons (19 women and two men), averaged Q 500 per month, while income per person for Rax Ulew from Totonicapán (10 women and seven men) averaged Q900 per month during the quarter. These numbers are quite impressive, considering the fact that the income represents net income, after deducting costs of materials and administration, and considering that they double and triple what the government had contemplated as a standard in its social support programs such as Mi Familia Progresiva.

During this quarter, efforts with these groups and their value chain concentrated along three main lines of activities:

- i The groups received additional strengthening and motivation workshops and interventions in order to prepare the groups for a new phase of training on production techniques in order to diversify their production.
- i Comunidades de la Tierra developed an aggressive and extended marketing and commercialization strategy in collaboration with its regional distribution partners. This effort will lead to the Wakami products being promoted and sold in market leading fairs and tradeshow in the USA and Europe during the first months of 2012, looking for increased and varied orders for the producer groups.
- i Comunidades de la Tierra is working with the local groups and a series of national and international partners in order to develop a series of complementary interventions related to improving health, education and other social indicators in the producer communities.

Support to improving local and institutional capabilities for public use planning and tourism management in protected areas continued along various fronts. An "Assessment of local capabilities for the development of community based tourism services in the Yaxha region" was performed this quarter as part of the preparatory steps for the preparation of the new Public Use Plan for the park. The assessment presents an integral analysis of the local conditions for tourism development in the region and identifies necessary additional services for the consolidation of the park as a destination. The complete assessment was performed under a value chain focus in order to ensure viability of the proposed actions. The findings of the assessment were then consolidated and completed into a "Plan for strengthening local capabilities for tourism development in the Yaxha region". The plan highlights the need to develop a process for integrated planning and development of tourism enterprises and tourism services under an integrated focus.

During this quarter Counterpart also participated in six different meetings in order to follow up on the implementation of the Public Use Plan for Mirador " Río Azul National Park developed with support from Counterpart International. The meetings involved a wide array of park stakeholders and involved extensive negotiation processes in order to ensure proper implementation of the plan.

As a follow up to previous sustainable tourism and protected area policy interventions, CONAP requested Counterpart's support in developing a code of ethics for the implementation of tourism activities in protected areas.

Previous assessments performed by Counterpart in collaboration with CONAP had demonstrated that the capacity for the implementation of formal regulations in Guatemalan protected areas is still low, so it was suggested that the implementation of voluntary codes of ethics and behavior guidelines may be better suited for current conditions. As the design of the code of ethics advanced it became apparent that specific tools were needed for different audiences. Thus, specific code of ethics and behavior guidelines are being developed for three main audiences: protected areas staff, service providers and visitors. The proposed documents are currently being validated by CONAP and stakeholders.

Counterpart is also working with CONAP in the development of monitoring tools that will enable appropriate follow up to the implementation of public use plans in protected areas. As a first approach, a monitoring tool for the implementation of the Mirador ◻ Río Azul public use plan is currently under development. The Mirador public use plan was the first one developed under the recent standards developed in collaboration with CONAP so it was selected as the starting point for this new process. The tool will provide a generic basis, susceptible of being adapted to other protected areas as they complete their public use planning processes.

Additionally, Counterpart is also working with CONAP in order to develop a tourism impact management tool for protected areas. This tool will be developed by implementing pilot tools in select protected areas and drawing from the experience in order to propose a general application tool. Given the past history of work and current conditions in specific protected areas, the pilot areas will be Yaxha National Park and Chikabal Volcano. In Yaxha, the tourism impact evaluation and monitoring tool will support park management in implementing improved general management actions. In Chikabal the tool will complement additional efforts implemented by CONAP and Counterpart such as the technical study for the necessary change of category for the park.

Counterpart is collaborating with CONAP in developing a strategy for the review and updating of the National Policy for Tourism in Protected Areas and its harmonization with different legal instruments and procedures. This initiative will be part of a greater endeavor financed by GEF for the improvement of sustainability in protected areas of Guatemala through orderly planning of ecotourism. It is anticipated that Counterpart may cover the costs associated by performing a consultancy in order to evaluate the National Policy and ensure its harmonization with other legal instruments applicable in the Guatemalan Protected Areas System.

Counterpart is collaborating with Guatemala's Center for Cleaner Production (CGP+L) in the implementation of the cleaner production methodology in 15 restaurants of Lake Atitlán, 3 hotels located within Tikal National Park and the facilities managed by the Tikal National Park Administration. During this quarter the introductory workshops and individual assessment and improvement plan preparation visits were performed in each region. During the follow up visits, a specific action plan for sustainability improvement was prepared and discussed with each one of the beneficiaries. CGP+L will continue to monitor results of this implementation in order to assess the improved efficiency and sustainability of the operations.

Counterpart continued to collaborate with INGUAT and INTECAP and local organizations in the training and certification of community tourism guides. During this quarter 53 new community tourism guides completed their training programs successfully in 3 different courses implemented in Sololá, Tejutla, San Marcos, and Chicoj, Alta Verapaz. Additionally, specialized courses were supported for tourism guides from Yaxha, Uaxactun, Carmelita and Melchor de Mencos forestry concessions.

Following up on the implementation of the Geotourism strategy, Counterpart led the implementation of a series of comprehensive assessments under the Geotourism focus for the main destinations of Guatemala and key areas of the program. Counterpart will continue to collaborate with the Geotourism council in order to produce the necessary tools and training and technical assistance opportunities in order to cover the most widespread needs identified during the Geotourism assessments.

Counterpart is collaborating with CONAP and the Central American Economic Integration Bank (BCIE) in the implementation of the National Congress on Traditional Uses of Biodiversity. This congress is one of the important follow up actions for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, after Guatemala became recognized as one of the 19 Mega diverse countries in the world. During this quarter discussions focused on the contents and methodology of the congress, which will be held during the end of March. It is expected that approximately 100 leaders from rural communities will gather in order to share experiences on traditional uses of biodiversity and to share challenges and opportunities that should be approached through planning and support actions by the relevant government and

private institutions. Of course, tourism and handicrafts are included amongst the main uses of biodiversity that local communities are interested in developing in an integral way respecting traditional knowledge but also catering to market needs.

During November, Counterpart provided logistic and technical support to CONAP for the presentations on the Ecological Integrity Status of the Maya Biosphere. The main presentation was held at Guatemala's National Palace on November 16 and participants included the President, members of the cabinet and government officials, international cooperation officers and NGO representatives.

Counterpart collaborated with Yaxha-Nakum-Naranjo National Park's Administration, INTECAP and the Ministry of Economy in order to develop a workshop on "Creation and management of microenterprises" Entrepreneurship" for communities surrounding Yaxha National Park. The workshop was implemented from November 21 to December 14 in an intensive fashion with eight daily hours of training. In total, 35 people (15 women and 20 men) completed the workshop.

On December 21st the administration of Tikal National Park provided an information and commercialization kiosk, located in the main entrance to Tikal for usage by Uaxactun's Tourism Commission. The materialization of the kiosk in Tikal is a result of the support provided by Counterpart and Asociación Balam to the Tourism Commission of Uaxactun, and took place after an extensive negotiation with the management of Tikal National Park. It has been identified that having a tourism information and commercialization point in Tikal is of key importance in order to generate traffic to Uaxactun. In the past two years Counterpart has supported Uaxactun in the implementation of the Equinox festival, which has significantly increased the number of visitors to Uaxactun on specific dates; however, in order to generate tourism traffic during the rest of the year, Uaxactun needed a promotional point at a mainstream destination such as Tikal. The official event for the presentation of the kiosk was attended by representatives of Uaxactun, INGUAT, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Tourism Chamber, FUNDESA, Asociación Balam and Counterpart.

II. 1st Quarter FY2012 Results Summary Tables

PMP Indicators					
Indicator	Project Global Target	FY 2011 accumulated total	Fiscal Year 2012 Target	1st Qtr. 2012	Cumulative Total
Income generated (US\$)	\$20,000,000.00	18,108,195	3,000,000	1,481,639	19,589,833.91
From tourism		13,013,786	2,000,000	803,863	
From handicrafts		5,094,408	1,000,000	677,776	
New Jobs created (Full time job equivalents)	8,700	5,261	2,580	92	5,353
Visitors	675,430	720,053	130,000	52,882	772,935
New SMEs created	220	132	88	6	138
Strengthened organizations	1124 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>	1145 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>	220 <i>(currently)</i>	205 <i>(currently)</i>	1168 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>
Credit allocated for tourism and handicrafts initiatives (US\$)	1,005,581	925,566	82,000	27,226	952,792
Leverage (US\$)	8,572,000	7,857,655	1,002,000	161,295	7,732,251
Cost share (US\$)	2,600,000	2,215,886	515,000	99,948	2,185,910

ETEO - SO2 / ECON GROWTH INDICATORS OP Indicators <i>Program Element 6.2 Private Sector Productivity</i>					
Indicator	Project Global Target	FY 2011 accumulated total	Fiscal Year 2012 Target	1st Qtr. 2012	Cumulative Total
<i>Program Element 6.2 Private Sector Productivity</i>					
Number of firms currently receiving USG assistance to improve mgmt. practices	1,124 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>	1145 <i>(cumulative)</i>	220 <i>(Current)</i>	205 <i>(Current)</i>	1168 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>
Number of SMEs currently receiving USG assistance to access bank loans or private equity	196 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>	179 <i>(cumulative)</i>	17 <i>(current)</i>	5 <i>(current)</i>	184 <i>(cumulative LOP)</i>
Number of public-private dialogue mechanisms utilized as a result of USG assistance.	4	4 maintained	4 maintained	4 maintained	4 maintained
<i>Program Element 8.1 Natural Resources and Biodiversity</i>					
Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable	10,869	10,108	1,000	258	10,367

natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance					
Number of women	5,142	4,811	450	108	4,920
Number of men	5,727	5,297	550	150	5,447
Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	7,210	6,591	750	143	6,734
Sales of goods and services as a result of USAID programs, In thousand \$	20,000	18,108	3,000	1,482	19,590
Number of jobs created as a result of USAID programs (Full time job equivalents)	8,700	5,261	2,580	92	5,353
Number of households benefiting directly from USG interventions.	13,372	13,744	2,000	401	14,146

III. Introduction

Guatemala's natural and cultural heritage and its human resources give the country a rich potential to compete in tourism and handicrafts international markets. Tourism and handicrafts initiatives help to generate and strengthen enterprises and activities in rural areas (including community organizations and micro, small and medium enterprises). Tourism has become a leading economic activity within the Guatemalan national balance; however, Guatemalan tourism still faces huge challenges related to consolidating the traditional and non-traditional offer and to generating new options for special interest markets that may be driven based on Guatemala's unique cultural, archaeological and biodiversity assets. Despite many initiatives, most of them isolated, for the development and marketing of tourism products by communities and small and medium scale businesses, the Guatemalan offer of tourism products and services has not been able to penetrate all key markets and in many cases lacks integration into relevant value chains.

The Alianza para el Turismo Comunitario (the Alliance), implemented by Counterpart International and its partners, through a cooperative agreement with USAID, has represented an excellent opportunity to work at the local level, promoting a greater number of micro, small and medium enterprises and enabling them to compete in international markets. The Alliance has generated, and continues to establish, a wide array of possibilities for poverty reduction, local development and food security through income and job generation in rural areas, while helping to preserve the natural and cultural heritage.

By linking sustainable natural and cultural resource management with market opportunities, the necessary economic incentives are generated so that community members become interested in managing their heritage in a sustainable manner and at the same time are better able adapt to the challenges posed by climate change. In order to support community organizations, MSMEs and other tourism organizations, Counterpart will continue to implement its activities through the following strategies: 1) building the organizational capacity of rural communities and SME tourism operations; 2) creating and marketing Guatemala's distinct brand for natural and cultural community destinations; 3) improving access to marketing, product design and financial services for the SMEs in tourism destinations and handicraft development; 4) using strategic public-private alliances and, 5) improving local support for and participation in the conservation of biological diversity.

This report describes the main activities and results developed during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012 in the regions where the project has planned interventions. Counterpart developed the activities in close coordination with institutional partners from the Guatemalan government, private sector and other NGOs including: INGUAT, CONAP, Ministry of Culture and Sports, INTECAP, Ministry of Economy, National Geographic, ANACAFE, COOPSAMA, Asociación Balam, AGEXPORT's Arts and Crafts and Sustainable Tourism Commissions, Guatemala's Microfinance Network (REDIMIF), Grupos Gestores, Guatemala's Chamber of Tourism (CAMTUR), Association for the Integral Development of Guatemala (ADIGUA), and Maya 2012 Committee. At the same time, Counterpart continues to generate and strengthen relationships and joint work initiatives with local and regional partners such as tourism committees and commissions, local NGOs, cooperatives and producer groups.

IV. General description of activities and results

Component A: Tourism and Handicrafts Value Chain Strengthening

Objective 1: Support and create a greater number of sustainable tourism and handicrafts SMEs and community based organizations in rural destinations through the value chain approach.

Objective 2: Improve access to marketing, product design, and financial and credit services for SMEs and community organizations involved in sustainable tourism and/or handicrafts development.

Activities:

1.1 Improve marketing and business practices for tourism SMEs and CBOs through the value chain approach: “Logremos que su empresa ó destino venda más” (Let’s boost your business) program

During the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2012 Counterpart continued to implement customized technical assistance and training activities for MSMEs and Community Tourism Organizations in key regions of the country through the “Let’s boost your business” (*Logremos que su empresa o destino venda más*) program. Marketing and promotional strategies and activities were designed and implemented both with previous and new beneficiaries.

Petén

In Petén, Counterpart continues to provide technical assistance to a considerable number of tourism and handicrafts SMEs in Central Petén, Southern Petén and El Remate. For the SMEs recently incorporated into the technical assistance program the main actions focused on performing an evaluation of current conditions opportunities and challenges and implementing the main priorities identified through the evaluation process. As in many cases, some of the main needs identified were related to consolidating a professional corporate image. The process for developing a consolidated corporate image begins with the production of a logo and branding elements. During the first quarter of 2012 new brands were developed for Exploradores de la Cultura Maya Travel Agency, Deli-Chapín Restaurant, Casa Doña Tonita Restaurant, Nakun’s Pizza, and Luis Carlos Hotel.

Counterpart worked with those SMEs in the commercialization and promotion phases of the technical assistance program on the production of the identified priority promotional and commercialization pieces including:

- i Business cards for Kan Ek’s Trails Travel Agency, Deli-Chapín Restaurant, and Red Frog Bar & Grill
- i Promotional banners for Maya Horizons Travel Agency, El Muelle Hotel and Restaurant, Don Abelino Hotel, and Deli-Chapín Restaurant
- i New menu for El Muelle Hotel and Restaurant
- i Printed magazine ad for Las Gardenias Hotel and Restaurant
- i Web content and pictures for Nakun Hotel
- i Content for the production of sales catalogs for Atesanías en Madera handicrafts

Counterpart supported the Southern Petén Tourism Committee (TURISURP) in the implementation of a Christmas Bazar and trade show that featured 15 SMEs from the region who promoted their products and services including tourism and hospitality services, handicrafts and organic products. Also, Counterpart continued to support TURISURP in collecting updated information and performing an evaluation in order to develop an updated version of the TURISURP portal www.rutanajtunich.com.



Logo for Exploradores de la Cultura Maya Travel Agency



Printed ad for Las Gardenias Hotel and Restaurant

Sololá

During this quarter Counterpart provided technical assistance through this program to a total of 24 beneficiaries, including 21 MSMEs, two associations and one federation in the municipalities of Sololá, Panajachel, San Pedro La Laguna, San Juan La Laguna, San Marcos La Laguna, Santa Catarina Palopó and Santiago Atitlán. With most of the beneficiaries, work focused on strategy design and implementation of marketing and promotion activities, while with some others work also included customized assessments and improvement plans and technical assistance for the implementation of sustainable practices under the concept of Geotourism.

Specific promotional materials produced during this quarter, through the learning by doing process, in collaboration with the beneficiaries included:

- i A promotional brochure and a banner were produced in order to promote the tourism activities recently developed by the Federation of Maya Peoples (FEDEPMA).
- i The English website for El Viajero Hotel was produced.
- i Services catalog for Hotel Posada Chinimayá and technical assistance in the strategy for promotion of the hotel in Panajachel and Antigua Guatemala travel agencies using the services catalog as the main promotional tool.
- i A Christmas season flyer was produced with Hotel Cacique Ralón from Sololá. More importantly, a series of control and quality control tools were produced and implemented with this beneficiary. Improvements include a guest registration form and specific client satisfaction surveys for lodging and events services. Counterpart will continue to work with Cacique Ralón in developing and implementing an appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategy based on the new controls.

- i Counterpart supported Hotel and Restaurant El Gran Mirador in planning and implementing a re-inauguration event of its restaurant and presenting its new improved services to relevant tourism sector stakeholders of the region.
- i Promotional brochures were produced with Zonas Turísticas Tour Operator from Panajachel and Casa Alegre Tour Operator from San Pedro La Laguna.
- i Counterpart worked with Hotel Villa del Ángel in producing a printed ad and collateral materials as part of a promotional strategy partially supported by the Ministry of Economy in the municipality of Sololá.
- i A promotional banner, a fact sheet and a virtual stand were produced with Maya Kaqchiquel Palopó Travel Agency.
- i Six promotional postcards were produced with Oxlajuj Blatz, an organization supporting different artisan women's groups from Sololá.
- i The web sites for San Pedro and San Marcos Spanish Schools were updated and English versions were completed.
- i Counterpart continued to work with Xuann Chi Ya, an organization supporting eight rural associations from Sololá in order to improve their commercialization. Labels for product quality and commercialization control were produced and a new catalog for a new line of natural fibers products is currently being developed.



Virtual stand for Maya Kakchiquel Palopó Tour Operator



Promotional brochure for Casa Alegre Tour Operator

Counterpart is supporting the Association for Integral Development of the Atitlán Basin (ADICLA) in the establishment of a new tourism and events venue in its farm El Encanto de Atitlán. During this quarter Counterpart worked with ADICLA in planning the process for the legal registration of the venue with the Guatemalan tax administration system and with Guatemala's Tourism Institute (INGUAT) and an electronic promotional flyer was also produced.

Counterpart's staff worked hand in hand with representatives of Jardín de América Spanish School to perform a practical assessment based on the principles of Geotourism. Based on the results of the assessment an improvement plan was drafted and Counterpart continues to provide technical assistance through the implementation

process. The school has incorporated the use of the Guatemala Geotourism Map as part of its curriculum for Spanish students.

Formalization and strengthening of six women's handicrafts groups from Lake Atitlán

Counterpart continued to collaborate with Fundación Tradiciones Mayas to formalize and strengthen as independent enterprises six women's groups producing handicrafts. Two workshops were implemented as part of this process with representatives of the six groups.

The first workshop provided the groups with a practical focus on financial management and accounting. During the workshop the women learned how to use and fill out receipts and how to calculate tax payments. Additionally, the women practiced documentation and monitoring of sales and income. As part of the learning by doing process, the leaders of each group who participated in the initial workshop had the opportunity to replicate the workshop with the complete membership of their own groups, so in turn there were six local workshops where all of the members of the groups became sensitized about the financial and accounting processes and practiced the relevant procedures.

The second workshop focused on accounting services optimization. The purpose of this workshop was for the women to learn about the processes and results that should be expected from the work of an accountant. The workshop will allow the women to assess and monitor the quality of the job performed by external and internal accountants for their organizations.



Women from the producer groups practice filling out receipts and tax forms during a workshop

Solola's Tourism Commission

Counterpart continued to participate as a member of Solola's Tourism Commission providing leadership and technical support in the implementation of marketing and other program development activities. During this quarter, Counterpart led the process for the development of the terms of reference that will guide the process for collection, editing and publication of tourism information in the Lake Atitlán destination portal. Also, Counterpart is participating in the process for consolidating and regulating the use of the Atitlán destination brand and additional promotional activities in preparation for the Semana Santa high season.

Verapaces

Cloud Forest Biological Corridor

Based on the Geotourism assessment described below on 2.4, Counterpart continued to work with natural reserves and ecotourism businesses of the Verapaces Cloud Forest Biological Corridor in order to perform an in depth analysis of needs and opportunities. The main needs for reactivation of tourism in the region, after the effects of the state of siege declared for the Verapaces region during most of 2011, were grouped into needs related to product development or enhancement and needs related to marketing. For the former, Counterpart will work with Cloud Forest representatives in order to develop a strategy and reach out to INGUAT, Ministry of Economy and other

donors who could invest in the necessary infrastructure and equipment enhancements. For the later, Counterpart is already working with Cloud Forest in order to develop and improve a series of marketing tools and sharing tools available for tourism visitation planning and management in protected areas. Some of the initial actions already underway include improvement of the regional destination web portal and production of printed promotional materials.

Technical assistance for Nuevo Amanecer Cooperative, Fray Bartolome de las Casas

Counterpart continued providing technical assistance to this cooperative, which manages a hotel and restaurant in Fray Bartolome de las Casas, on accounting and financial aspects in order to improve transparency and reporting to the constituency of the cooperative. Additionally, Counterpart supported an in depth technical assessment process of the tourism business. Some of the improvements implemented immediately after the assessment process include recalculation of prices and restructuring of menus for added efficiency in restaurant operations. Additional recommendations were made for improved services and facilities, leading to enhanced customer satisfaction. The cooperative's board expressed its commitment for sharing the findings with the members of the cooperative and implementing the recommended improvements.

Chirrepec Tea Tour and Chicoj Coffee Tour

Counterpart worked with Chirrepec Tea Tour to produce a promotional brochure, highlighting the new services offered and new features of the only tea tour in Guatemala. Additionally, the women participating in tour operations and food services received formal training through INTECAP.

Counterpart continued to collaborate with Chicoj Coffee Tour and as part of the promotional strategy, a promotional brochure was developed during this quarter.

2012: Archaeology, Astronomy, Epigraphy and Prophecies of the Ancient Maya Workshops

During 2011 Counterpart became a member of the 2012 Committee, a voluntary grouping of private, public and academic sector organizations aimed at promoting Guatemala as the epicenter of the 2012 Maya commemoration date and maximizing the potential of the topic for Guatemala's positioning. One of the main concerns of the Committee was to systematize relevant information about the Maya Calendar and 2012 and disseminate it with tourism sector leaders and opinion leaders in order to consolidate scientific knowledge about the event and provide grounds for appropriate promotion and product development.

As part of these efforts, Counterpart is leading the implementation of a series of informative workshops about the Maya 2012 commemoration. The workshops under the topic 2012: Archaeology, Astronomy, Epigraphy and Prophecies of the Ancient Maya are developed in two versions: general introductory workshops with duration of four hours are targeted at tourism sector leaders, while detailed workshops with duration of 16 hours are targeted at tourism guides and practitioners. As part of the preparation for these workshops Counterpart supported the preparation of a manual that serves as a supporting and illustrative document for the workshops. The workshops are complemented with discussion sessions and spaces where priorities for site improvement and promotion actions are shared amongst participants and conclusions are then used in further planning processes.

The first set of workshops was developed in Petén starting on October 19th. 14 tourism sector leaders (seven men and seven women) participated in the four hour workshop, while 19 tourism guides participated in the 16 hour workshop. These workshops included discussions on tourism product development and marketing around the events and sites related to the Maya 2012 and also included a field trip to the Maya sites of Tikal and Uaxactun.

The second set of workshops developed in Guatemala City included workshops for tourism sector leaders and government officials. On Tuesday October 25th, 22 Tourism leaders who have been involved in the 2012 Committee participated in a four hour workshop.

On Wednesday October 26th, 25 government officials from the Ministry of Culture and Sports participated in a four hour workshop. This workshop was then extended beyond lunch while Counterpart and the Ministry's representatives

discussed implications and future actions related to the Maya 2012 and the sites under jurisdiction of the Ministry; some of the salient topics included the need to produce tickets as well as interpretive and promotional materials for the sites related to the 2012 prophecies.

On Thursday October 27th, 117 government officials from the Guatemalan Tourism Institute (INGUAT) participated in two four hour workshops where the basic concepts around the Maya 2012 were shared and important points to consider in terms of tourism planning and marketing were discussed.

The workshops are being facilitated by a team of renowned Guatemalan archaeologists: Tomás Barrientos, Director of the Archaeology Department at Del Valle University and co-director of La Corona Archaeological project; Ernesto Arredondo, PhD., Co-director of the Uaxactun archaeological project; and Antonio Cuxil, a Maya Kaqchikel epigraphist and tour guide. Counterpart has also offered to facilitate a summarized version workshop for USAID mission staff and friends.

The courses generated coverage in national media, such as the following articles:

<http://www.s21.com.gt/nacionales/2011/11/12/imparten-curso-profecias-mayas-para-guias>

http://www.prensalibre.com/decision_libre_-_solola/Sector-turismo-alista_0_599340103.html

The table below summarizes the data from the workshops carried out this far:

Date	Length of workshop	Target audience	Location	Men	Women	Total Participants
November 12, 2011	4 horas	Sectur Turístico	Tecpán	9	8	17
October 19-21, 2011	16 horas	Guías de Turismo	Santa Elena Petén	17	2	19
October 19, 2011	4 horas	Sectur Turístico	Santa Elena Petén	7	7	14
November 21, 2011	4 horas	Sectur Turístico	Quetzaltenango	5	3	8
November 22, 2011	4 horas	Sectur Turístico	Panajachel	15	10	25
November 24 – 26, 2011	16 horas	Guías de Turismo	Santa Elena Petén	18	3	21
November 12, 2011	16 horas	Guías de Turismo	Ciudad de Guatemala	4	4	8
November 2, 2011	4 horas	Sectur Turístico	Antigua Guatemala	1	2	3
October 26, 2011	4 horas	IDA EH	Ciudad de Guatemala	3	14	17
October 25, 2011	4 horas	Comité 2012	Ciudad de Guatemala	10	10	20
December 8, 2011	16 horas	Personal Parque	Parque Nacional Tikal	28	9	37

		Nacional Tikal				
October 27, 2011	4 horas	Personal de Inguat	Edificio INGUAT			57
October 27, 2011	4 horas	Personal de Inguat	Edificio INGUAT			60
TOTAL						306



Antonio Cuxil explains Stela 16 of Tikal during the field trip of the Maya 2012 workshop



Ernesto Arredondo, co-director of the Uaxactun archaeological project explains details of the E-VII-Sub structure at Uaxactun to participants in the Maya 2012 workshop and local community tourism guides



Participants in one of the 2012 workshops use the manuals as an aid in the learning process

Assessment of sites and parks related to the 2012 commemoration

As part of the collaborative efforts with the 2012 Committee, Counterpart performed an in-depth analysis of 17 proposed sites and parks related to the 2012 commemoration. Based on a set of criteria, ten priority sites and parks were then selected to perform field evaluations. Field evaluations included both an assessment of the conditions of the sites or parks and their environs as well as a complete inventory of complementary services in the surrounding region. The study has been acknowledged as useful and very relevant both by 2012 Committee members and by government officials who immediately began planning processes based on the information provided. The assessment will also be used to produce different sets of communications pieces for the 2012 Committee web platform, Geotourism web platform, and for press and tour operator workshops.

Support to Guatemalan Fir (*Pinabete*) Conservation Efforts

Counterpart supported a series of promotional efforts for the conservation of the Guatemalan Fir (*Abies guatemalensis*) as part of its continuing support to Guatemalan Protected Areas Council (CONAP) in the sustainable management of protected areas and in the implementation of Guatemala's biodiversity strategy. The Guatemalan Fir or *Pinabete* an endemic species to the Guatemalan highlands and is in grave danger derived from two main threats: habitat and landscape destruction and illegal commercialization during the Christmas season. For years, *Pinabete* branches were sold in Guatemala City and main cities of the country during the Christmas season. The branches are used in decorations due to their evergreen nature and pleasant aroma. The problem with this practice is that the seedlings of the *Pinabete* are produced during November and December, so by cutting down the branches, seed propagation was prevented. The commercialization of *Pinabete* became so widespread that seed propagation was drastically reduced and the species became endangered. For several years now, CONAP has been leading efforts to certify sustainable plantations of Guatemalan *Pinabete* and promote sustainable practices among producers, distributors and consumers; for 2011 the activities were in danger of being cancelled due to drastic cutbacks in budget, so CONAP requested Counterpart's assistance. Counterpart collaborated with CONAP to host a series of concerts by Guatemala's Symphonic Orchestra in key *Pinabete* forest regions and markets. The concerts provided an ideal framework to communicate conservation messages on how to look for certified *Pinabete* while contributing to conservation of the species by not buying illegal branches. One concert was held in a key *Pinabete* production and transportation region, Quetzaltenango, with an attendance estimated around 2,500. Three concerts were held in Guatemala City in order to promote awareness in the main market for *Pinabete*: two concerts with a total attendance of over 4,800 people were held at Guatemala's National Theater, while a concert with an attendance of over 3,000 was held in Guatemala City's Main Square. All concerts were preceded by promotional spots and a small documentary detailing the importance of the *Pinabete* and how each individual can contribute to its conservation.



Concert in Guatemala City's main square



Concert in the National Theater

1.2 Increase access to credit and financial services for tourism and handicraft SMEs

Collaboration with Guatemala's Network of Microfinance Institutions (REDIMIF)

During this quarter, five credits were issued to entrepreneurs from Solola (3), Totonicapán (1) and San Marcos (1). The businesses from Solola and Totonicapán are specialized in handicrafts and the credits will serve as working capital in order to purchase raw materials and improve commercialization efforts. In San Marcos, the credit will be used to expand the work capital and purchase equipment for a handicrafts workshop. In total, the credits amount US\$27,225.81 (Q. 211,000.00), with the smallest loan being equivalent to US\$645.16 and the largest one to US\$10,580.65. In total, these five enterprises provide 36 full time jobs to 20 indigenous women, 12 indigenous men, and four non-indigenous men.

A workshop on strategic and operational planning for microfinance institutions was held on November 23 – 25th in Guatemala City. 11 women and 17 men, representatives of Guatemalan microfinance institutions associated with REDIMIF participated in the workshop and received the necessary tools in order to combine appropriately financial planning and sustainability through an improved focus on social management performance and social business responsibility.

Collaboration with the Association for the Integral Development of Guatemala (ADIGUA)

During this quarter Counterpart worked with ADIGUA to design a series of interventions aimed at promoting rural credits for tourism and handicrafts entrepreneurs and linking them to commercial opportunities through participation in regional trade fairs. The interventions will include a novel combination of market readiness workshops and technical assistance in order to improve product and service packaging and commercialization abilities,

commercialization opportunities through the regional fairs, and technical assistance for the improvement of business practices. Joint activities will begin early in the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2012.

Credits for productive projects with families from communities in Chisec and Raxruhá, Alta Verapaz

During the fiscal year 2011, Counterpart and local partner AGRETUCHI (Community Tourism Association of Chisec and Raxruhá) implemented a rural credits program in order to incorporate families from local communities into the tourism value chain through sourcing poultry and eggs for local restaurants. Local credit cooperative COOPSAMA provided the loans for the eight families under the condition that Counterpart continued to provide technical assistance through the implementation phase of the program. During this quarter, efforts focused on implementing technical assistance and continuous monitoring and evaluation of the productive projects. Counterpart also helped some of the families with marketing and commercializing their production, a process that resulted both in increased sales and also in increased demand for the replication of the initiative with additional families from surrounding communities. Counterpart is currently working with local partners AGRETUCHI and INTECAP in order to identify the best way of expanding the program to cover at least 30 additional families from communities adjacent to the Candelaria Caves National Park. It is foreseen that some of the initial beneficiaries may become field extension agents, providing technical assistance for the new beneficiaries and additional sources of funding for the loans are currently under evaluation.

1.3 Develop and consolidate new tourism products and services in the Western Highlands

Consolidation of tourism products and services in San Marcos and Totonicapán

Based on the results of the Geotourism assessments described below on 2.4, and on the collaborative efforts developed with Grupos Gestores, Counterpart will continue to collaborate with Grupos Gestores in order to develop a new concept of tourism and handicrafts business outlet for Totonicapán and San Marcos. The tourism information and attention centers will work based on the model of a tour operator developed also as a joint collaborative effort between Counterpart and Grupos Gestores for the central and western highlands. The tourism information and attention centers will consolidate tourism and handicrafts offer from the surrounding region and provide a commercial outlet and varied consolidation opportunities so that end users, tour operators and event organizers can shop for their necessary products and services in a consolidated manner. At the same time, Counterpart and Grupos Gestores will continue to provide the necessary training and technical assistance for tourism and handicrafts providers so that they can carry out a successful business relationship with the tourism information and attention centers.

Additionally, Counterpart is supporting the Local Tourism Committee of Sibinal, San Marcos and its community association members in the design and implementation of a series of operational and sustainability manuals in order to consolidate tourism operations. During the Geotourism assessment phase it was identified that these groups, which were supported by Counterpart and several donors in the past in order to develop their preliminary tourism products, needed further assistance in order to guarantee proper management of a reservation system and proper operations of the tourism guides groups. The technical assistance process will produce specific policies and operational guidelines for the implementation of sustainable practices related to environmental, sociocultural and entrepreneurial fields. Also, the formats and regulations for control and monitoring of operations will be developed in order to guarantee timely and sustainable operations. The communities of Sibinal serve Tajumulco volcano, the highest volcano in Central America, and a series of community-run farms offering interactive activities for visitors.

Vuelve a la Vida

Counterpart is supporting the community organization managing Vuelve a la Vida hot springs in San Carlos Sija, Quetzaltenango. After having completed the process for generating a logo and guidelines for a unified corporate image through the learning by doing process, and an integrated work plan, the next task at hand was contributing to strengthening the group in basic aspects such as: creating internal operations guidelines, designing a positions

manual for the organization, and developing strategic and annual plans. During this quarter Counterpart supported the group in preparing its internal rules and regulations document, which was validated by the group.

1.4 Incubate new handicrafts producer groups in the Western Highlands and incorporate into value chains

Under the sub awards with Comunidades de la Tierra, three women's producer groups were formalized and incorporated into the Wakami value chain during 2011. The results of the 2011 interventions became crystalized early in 2012 when the groups started receiving orders for their production and their incomes increased significantly. Income per person for the group Vida y Esperanza, San Cristóbal, Totonicapán, formed by 21 persons (19 women and two men), averaged Q 500 per month, while income per person for Rax Ulew from Totonicapán (10 women and seven men) averaged Q900 per month during the quarter. These numbers are quite impressive, considering the fact that the income represents net income, after deducting costs of materials and administration, and considering that they double and triple what the government had contemplated as a standard in its social support programs such as Mi Familia Progresista.

During this quarter, efforts with these groups and their value chain concentrated along three main lines of activities:

- i The groups received additional strengthening and motivation workshops and interventions. These actions were necessary because the groups will need to undergo a new phase of training on production techniques in order to diversify their production. Up to the end of Fiscal Year 2011 each group had become specialized in producing one line of items; however, in light of the new expanded commercialization efforts, described below, groups will now have to become able to produce different lines of products in order to satisfy foreseen increased and varied orders through the promotion and commercialization activities.
- i Comunidades de la Tierra developed an aggressive and extended marketing and commercialization strategy in collaboration with its regional distribution partners. This effort will lead to the Wakami products being promoted and sold in market leading fairs and tradeshow in the USA and Europe during the first months of 2012. The business plan indicates that these improved and expanded promotion and commercialization efforts will result in increased and varied orders for the producer groups.
- i Comunidades de la Tierra is working with the local groups and a series of national and international partners in order to develop a series of complementary interventions related to improving health, education and other social indicators in the producer communities. On one hand, Comunidades is working with the producer groups in order to set up model homes incorporating energy efficient stoves, water collection mechanisms, sustainable orchards Eco filters and other improvements leading to improved home conditions and sustainability. On the other hand, Comunidades is also working with providers and other donors in order to seek for low cost and socially sensitive alternatives for providing the necessary improvements in an accessible manner for members of the beneficiary communities. Efforts are beginning to yield results and a significant number of orders for Eco filters has been placed by the members of the groups who understand the benefits of consuming purified water in their households.

1.5 Strengthen artisan groups already operating in the Western Highlands through the development of value added handicrafts collections and insertion into value chains

This component is implemented through a sub award with AGEXPORT's Arts and Crafts Commission. During the first quarter of 2012 actions concentrated on consolidating the collections and production process with 15 beneficiary groups that had started the process in 2011 and preliminary scouting for five additional producer groups that will be incorporated into the process during 2012. Final results in terms of production for the producer groups incorporated in 2011 are included in the summary table below:

Group	Location	Type of handicrafts	Number of new products developed	Beneficiaries	
				Women	Men
Grupo Renacer	Aldea Quiaquizuyal, Malacatancito, Huehuetenango.	Vegetable fibers	20	17	3
Asociación de Cooperativas de Huehuetenango - ASDECOHUE-	Costado sur campo de aviación las lagunas zona 10, Huehuetenango.	Textiles	19	7	0
Coop. De Producción Artesanal Unión Chuhumateca	Aldea Chiaval, Todos Santos Cuchumatanes, Huehuetenango.	Textiles	20	22	18
Concepto Ixil / Fundación AGROS	18Av B # 7-45 zona 15 vista Hermosa I. Nebaj, Quiché.	Textiles	20	45	0
Asoc. Chajulense	San Gaspar Chajul, Quiché.	Textiles	26	50	0
Coop. Integral de Producción de Palma COIPALMA R.L	Santa Cruz del Quiché, Quiché.	Palm leaves	32	85	4
DISESAMA	Cantón Chubaj KM. 135.5, Chichicastenango , Quiché.A la par de iglesia Catolica	Textiles	39	200	40
De Colores	6a. Calle 6-21, Z-1, Colonia 10 de Julio Chichicastenango, Quiché.	Textiles	26	30	18
Ruth y Noemi	Colonia 10 de Julio, Casa No. 41, Chichicastenango, Quiché.	Textiles	24	22	17
COPACAT	Canton Poxlaju, Totonicapán.	Pottery	26	12	20
Cajetería Ajpop	7a. Calle 1-43 Zona 4, Totonicapán	Wood	27	4	5
Asociación AMA	5 Ave. "A" 6-17 Zona 1 Quetzaltenango	Textiles	18	200	0
Asociación Sostenible para el Desarrollo Integral de Loma Linda "ASODILL-	Aldea Loma Linda, El Palmar, Quetzaltenango	Bamboo	32	3	8
Asociación Nueva Alianza	Aldea San Martín Chiquito, Quetzaltenango .	Textiles	20	15	0
Asociación de Desarrollo Integral Rural ASDIR / Mujeres Trabajadoras Chotzak	Caserío Xetimit Edificio No. 184, Aldea Nimasac Totonicapán, Guatemala	Plastic threads	30	8	2
			379	720	135

While completing the production process, the 15 beneficiary organizations also developed promotional and marketing packages that will be used in order to commercialize the new collections in specialized trade shows and outlets. The basic promotional package for each one of the 15 organizations includes:

- i 300 product catalogues
- i 300 labels
- i 200 business cards
- i 1 banner
- i 1 CD with final arts of all the materials

During October and November the Arts and Crafts Commission worked on drafting a quality manual for handicrafts producing communities in the Western Highlands of Guatemala. The process began with a series of field visits to different groups supported under the sub award in order to assess their main challenges and shortcomings in terms of quality. The first draft of the manual was produced during this quarter and it will be validated during the next quarter.



Product collection for Ruth y Nohemí



Product catalog for Asdecohue

Component B: Market-based Conservation Strategies through Tourism and Handicrafts Sectors

Objective 3: Improve the capacity of local communities and other key stakeholders to co-manage and preserve natural and cultural resources through tourism.

Objective 4: Improve local community and other key stakeholders support for and participation in the conservation of biological diversity in the regions around key tourism sites.

2.1 Improve local and institutional capabilities on public use planning and tourism management in protected areas

Preliminary steps for the preparation of the Public Use Plan for Yaxha-Nakum-Naranjo National Park

An "Assessment of local capabilities for the development of community based tourism services in the Yaxha region" was performed this quarter as part of the preparatory steps for the preparation of the new Public Use Plan for the park. The assessment presents an integral analysis of the local conditions for tourism development in the region and identifies necessary additional services for the consolidation of the park as a destination. The complete assessment was performed under a value chain focus in order to ensure viability of the proposed actions. Some of the main findings of the assessment include:

- i The lack of economic alternatives produces high levels of unemployment in the Yaxha region, especially in the village of La Maquina. Such situation constitutes a direct threat to the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage, main tourism asset of the region.
- i Tourism constitutes a definitive sustainable development opportunity for Yaxha; however, the tourism development process must be planned and ordered in order to guarantee income and benefits for local communities.
- i There are at least eight groups in different stages of organization who participate or want to participate in the provision of tourism services. The status of each group was assessed individually and recommendations were made, but most importantly, the study shows that the groups need to work on forging a unified vision that will let them work in harmony and strengthen Yaxha as a destination. Also, the assessment shows that the groups have been working more as nonprofit entities than as businesses so a change of vision in this regard is also essential.

The findings of the assessment were then consolidated and completed into a "Plan for strengthening local capabilities for tourism development in the Yaxha region". The plan highlights the need to develop a process for integrated planning and development of tourism enterprises and tourism services under an integrated focus. The plan was developed utilizing a novel methodology by which the consultant led a planning group formed by main stakeholders for the park such as the Ministry of Culture and Sports, CONAP, Counterpart, local development committees, and tour operators. The plan places a strong focus on prioritizing general destination actions.

Support to the implementation of the Mirador " Río Azul Public Use Plan

During this quarter Counterpart participated in six different meetings in order to follow up on the implementation of the Public Use Plan for Mirador " Río Azul National Park developed with support from Counterpart International. The meetings involved a wide array of park stakeholders and involved extensive negotiation processes in order to ensure proper implementation of the plan. One of the main challenges is the fact that some community members from Carmelita refused to participate in the community tourism guide training and certification process and now are unable to provide services. Despite some setbacks, most participants agree that important steps have been taken in order to improve orderly implementation of tourism activities in the Park. During the meetings CONAP also informed of the efforts to disseminate and discuss the Public Use Plan with park rangers and personnel who serve security purposes in different spots of the park.

Code of ethics for the implementation of tourism activities in protected areas

As a follow up to previous sustainable tourism and protected area policy interventions, CONAP requested Counterpart's support in developing a code of ethics for the implementation of tourism activities in protected areas. Previous assessments performed by Counterpart in collaboration with CONAP had demonstrated that the capacity for the implementation of formal regulations in Guatemalan protected areas is still low, so it was suggested that the implementation of voluntary codes of ethics and behavior guidelines may be better suited for current conditions. As the design of the code of ethics advanced it became apparent that specific tools were needed for different audiences. Thus, specific code of ethics and behavior guidelines are being developed for three main audiences: protected areas staff, service providers and visitors. The proposed documents are currently being validated by CONAP and stakeholders. Once approved in their final version, Counterpart and CONAP will continue to collaborate in order to prepare a series of dissemination materials and workshops in order to motivate protected areas and stakeholders in the implementation of the specific behavior codes.

Monitoring tools for the implementation of public use plans and impact management in protected areas

Counterpart is working with CONAP in the development of monitoring tools that will enable appropriate follow up to the implementation of public use plans in protected areas. As a first approach, a monitoring tool for the implementation of the Mirador ◻ Río Azul public use plan is currently under development. The Mirador public use plan was the first one developed under the recent standards developed in collaboration with CONAP so it was selected as the starting point for this new process. The tool will provide a generic basis, susceptible of being adapted to other protected areas as they complete their public use planning processes.

Additionally, Counterpart is also working with CONAP in order to develop a tourism impact management tool for protected areas. This tool will be developed by implementing pilot tools in select protected areas and drawing from the experience in order to propose a general application tool. Given the past history of work and current conditions in specific protected areas, the pilot areas will be Yaxha National Park and Chikabal Volcano. In Yaxha, the tourism impact evaluation and monitoring tool will support park management in implementing improved general management actions. In Chikabal the tool will complement additional efforts implemented by CONAP and Counterpart such as the technical study for the necessary change of category for the park.

Review and update of the National Policy and legal instruments for tourism in protected areas

Counterpart is collaborating with CONAP in developing a strategy for the review and updating of the National Policy for Tourism in Protected Areas and its harmonization with different legal instruments and procedures. This initiative will be part of a greater endeavor financed by GEF for the improvement of sustainability in protected areas of Guatemala through orderly planning of ecotourism. It is anticipated that Counterpart may cover the costs associated by performing a consultancy in order to evaluate the National Policy and ensure its harmonization with other legal instruments applicable in the Guatemalan Protected Areas System.

2.2 Support SMEs in the implementation of good management and environmental practices leading to a sustainable tourism certification seal

Counterpart develops this component through alternative activities that lead to improving management and sustainability practices and promoting some form of public and sector recognition for those SMEs involved. The alternative activities include: Working with Guatemala's Center for Cleaner Production in order to implement the cleaner production methodology in selected businesses in specific destinations of the country and using the Geotourism strategy as a complementary good practices implementation and recognition intervention for tourism businesses and destinations.

Implementation of cleaner production in restaurants of Lake Atitlán

Counterpart is collaborating with Guatemala's Center for Cleaner Production (CGP+L) for the implementation of the cleaner production methodology in 15 restaurants of Lake Atitlán. During November and December 2011, 12 restaurants from the Lake Atitlán region received follow up visits, after having participated in two workshops during

the previous quarter and an initial assessment visits. During the follow up visits, the action plan for sustainability improvement was prepared and discussed with the beneficiaries. As was expected from the preliminary visits, the improvements were centered on improving water and energy efficiency. A summary of the practical actions that will be implemented during the next quarter includes:

- i Replacing damaged fiberglass ceilings with transparent polycarbonate ones in order to improve illumination and extend durability.
- i Install air devices in hand and dish washers in order to reduce water consumption by up to 35%.
- i Verify pipelines in order to detect and correct leaks.
- i Substitute flushing tanks replacing 12 lt with 8 lt ones, and 8lt with 6 lt ones.
- i Substitute incandescent bulbs for energy efficient ones.
- i Implement a monthly monitoring of water and energy consumption.
- i Implement a monitoring control of number of customers serve in order to calculate water and energy consumption per customer.
- i Negotiate with cold beverages providers to substitute old, damaged and leaking fridges with new efficient ones.

In total 12 individual action plans were prepared in collaboration with SMEs owners and representatives in order to respond to the actual challenges and opportunities and to the economic situation of each individual business. Implementation and monitoring by CGP+L and Counterpart field staff will begin early in January 2012, although some actions have already started.

Implementation of cleaner production in hotels and administration of Tikal National Park

As part of the collaborative effort with Guatemala's Center for Cleaner Production (CGP+L), Counterpart is also implementing the Cleaner Production methodology in the three private hotels located within the grounds of Tikal National Park and with the administration of the park, which manages one of Guatemala's top tourism destinations on a day to day basis.

The process started in early October, with one to one meetings with representatives of each hotel and the park administration in order to discuss the opportunity and the requirements and obligations for those involved in the process. The three hotels located within Tikal National Park are Jaguar Inn, Jungle Lodge and Tikal Inn. After initial agreement was reached during the one to one meetings, a two day induction workshop was held in Flores, Peten in order to introduce hotel representatives and park managers into the cleaner production principles and methodology. The workshop resulted in full agreement by the hotels and park administration to participate in the process and technical visits to each of the venues were programmed. Site visits during November and December served to perform in situ evaluations and measurements of water and energy consumption, as well as performing evaluations of illumination and waste management, among others. Implementation plans were drafted individually with each beneficiary and a green team with a key leader was established in each venue in order to follow up on the recommendations for the implementation of the action plans. Implementation is currently underway and the initial results evaluation is expected for the end of the next quarter.

Identification of Geotourism improvements for destinations and SMEs

As part of the follow up actions to the implementation of the Geotourism strategy in Guatemala, Counterpart performed a series of detailed field assessments of Geotourism traits and SMEs in the main tourism regions of the country and in the main areas of interest for the program. The results of the assessments highlighted a series of shared needs by Geotourism traits and SMEs in relation to the implementation of sustainability actions. Counterpart has initiated work with its partners in order to produce a series of priority tools that were identified as necessary in order to improve environmental sustainability in tourism businesses and destinations. A manual and workshops on how to incorporate good practices related to protection of native species, prevention of invasive species and complying with rules and regulations related to wild flora and fauna will be implemented. Also specific interventions are being developed in order to better assist tourism enterprises and destinations in developing and implementing

interpretive plans and activities in order to highlight the particular landscape, biological and cultural features of each particular destination and venue. Implementation of recommendations has started with some specific beneficiaries of the program who demonstrated commitment to the initiative, such as Jardín de América Spanish School in Sololá.

2.3 Facilitate training and certification or re-certification of a larger number of Community Tourism Guides

Community tourism guide official course for Solola

The official course for community tourism guides was implemented in collaboration with the Tzolojya Association of Municipalities (MANCTZOLOJYA) in Sololá. The course, which included different topics such as: fundamentals of community tourism, quality in tourism attention, group management and tourism highlights of Guatemala and each specific municipality, culminated on December 22. In total, ten men and nine women from the municipalities of Santa Lucía Utatlán and San Jose Chacayá completed the course.



Community tourism guides from Sololá after receiving their certificate

Tejutla, San Marcos

The official community tourism guide course was completed on October 2011 in Tejutla, San Marcos with nine men and eleven women.

Chicoj Cooperative, Cobán Alta Verapaz

The official community tourism guide course was completed on October 22, 2011 in Chicoj Cooperative, Cobán, Alta Verapaz with nine men and five women who provide guiding services of the coffee tour and adventure circuit.

Yaxha region community tourism guides

As part of the coordination efforts with the management structure of Yaxha – Nakum – Naranjo National Park and the communities providing tourism services within the region, Counterpart collaborated with INTECAP and the Ministry of Economy to implement a series of specialized courses for community tourism guides. During September and October a series of three courses on orchid identification and management were carried out with an average of 16 tourism guides from the communities serving Yaxha National Park. The course included a practical activity, in which orchids were “rescued” from the trails of the park and set up as a demonstrative area after proper treatment and identification with common and scientific names. The courses not only provided guides with specific knowledge about the orchids of the park, but also help the community tourism guides in certifying additional training hours in order to update their official certificates as guides.

Birdwatching and tourism service courses for Maya Biosphere community tourism guides

A series of introductory courses to bird watching were implemented in collaboration with the Association of Forestry Communities of Peten (ACOFOP). The course covered the general principles of bird biology and ecology and general principles for guiding bird watching groups and identifying local species. The course in Uaxactún was held on October 5 to 7 with 9 men and 5 women; in Carmelita from November 2 to 5 with 12 men and one woman and in Melchor de Mencos on November 16 to 18 with eight men and two women. Additionally, a course on "Excellent tourism service" was culminated in October with 16 men and six women from Melchor de Mencos.

2.4 Design and implement expansion strategy for Geotourism initiative in Guatemala

Counterpart led the implementation of a series of comprehensive assessments under the Geotourism focus for the main destinations of Guatemala and key areas of the program. Consultants were selected from a pool of tourism and local development experts, and received a full day of induction and training on the Geotourism concepts and the tools and methodologies available during the last quarter of FY2011. The assessments were completed during the first quarter of 2012 and the consultants received constant advice and supervision from Counterpart to carry out a comprehensive assessment combining information collected from the printed Map Guide creation process and from other primary and secondary sources. Counterpart will continue to collaborate with the Geotourism council in order to produce the necessary tools and training and technical assistance opportunities in order to cover the most widespread needs identified during the Geotourism assessments. Some of the main needs identified for most of the destinations and SMEs evaluated include:

- i Appropriate management of native, foreign, and invasive species.
- i First aid and emergency procedures.
- i Marketing and commercialization.
- i Additional business management tools.
- i Summarized legal framework for tourism enterprises.
- i General service and quality courses and procedures.
- i Sustainability planning and implementation.
- i Development of alternative products.
- i Interpretation and environmental education.

2.5 Implement environmental and sustainable tourism good management practices in rural communities

Maya biosphere communities

Counterpart is supporting the communities providing tourism services associated to the Tayazal archaeological site, in the buffer zone of the Maya Biosphere Reserve. The initial interventions were related to providing the communities with a general overview of the tourism activity in the region and improved quality in service for visitors. During this quarter two courses were implemented in collaboration with INTECAP for these communities of the San Miguel village. The first course on "Community Tourism" was implemented from November 12 to December 15 with 12 women and four men. The second course on "Excellence in customer service" was implemented from November 14 to December 5 with 12 women and three men.

In collaboration with the Association of Forestry Communities of Peten (ACOFOP), courses on Tourism Management Principles were implemented with the tourism commissions of Uaxactún (8 men and 7 women), Carmelita (9 men) and Melchor de Mencos (11 men and 5 women). The three courses culminated in the beginning of October.

National Congress on Traditional Uses of Biodiversity

Counterpart is collaborating with CONAP and the Central American Economic Integration Bank (BCIE) in the implementation of the National Congress on Traditional Uses of Biodiversity. This congress is one of the important follow up actions for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, after Guatemala became recognized as one of the

19 Mega diverse countries in the world. During this quarter discussions focused on the contents and methodology of the congress, which will be held during the end of March. It is expected that approximately 100 leaders from rural communities will gather in order to share experiences on traditional uses of biodiversity and to share challenges and opportunities that should be approached through planning and support actions by the relevant government and private institutions. Of course, tourism and handicrafts are included amongst the main uses of biodiversity that local communities are interested in developing in an integral way respecting traditional knowledge but also catering to market needs.

2.6 Strengthen the working relationship between the government of Guatemala and the Maya Biosphere Reserve communities for tourism development

During November, Counterpart provided logistic and technical support to CONAP for the presentations on the Ecological Integrity Status of the Maya Biosphere. The main presentation was held at Guatemala's National Palace on November 16 and participants included the President, members of the cabinet and government officials, international cooperation officers and NGO representatives.

Entrepreneurship workshops for the communities serving Yaxha-Nakum-Naranjo National Park

Counterpart collaborated with the Park's Administration, INTECAP and the Ministry of Economy in order to develop a workshop on "Creation and management of microenterprises" Entrepreneurship for communities surrounding Yaxha National Park. The workshop was implemented from November 21 to December 14 in an intensive fashion with eight daily hours of training. In total, 35 people (15 women and 20 men) completed the workshop. Most of the participants in the workshop are members of the groups supported by the Park's Administration and Counterpart in the process for strengthening of local capabilities and the implementation of an improved Public Use Plan for the Park.



Members of the communities surrounding Yaxha-Nakum-Naranjo National Park received the awards certifying completion of the course on entrepreneurship at the ceremony held in Los Tulipanes

Information and commercialization kiosk for Uaxactun Tourism Commission in Tikal National Park

On December 21st the administration of Tikal National Park provided an information and commercialization kiosk, located in the main entrance to Tikal for usage by Uaxactun's Tourism Commission. The materialization of the kiosk in Tikal is a result of the support provided by Counterpart and Asociación Balam to the Tourism Commission of Uaxactun, and took place after an extensive negotiation with the management of Tikal National Park. It has been identified that having a tourism information and commercialization point in Tikal is of key importance in order to

generate traffic to Uaxactun. In the past two years Counterpart has supported Uaxactun in the implementation of the Equinox festival, which has significantly increased the number of visitors to Uaxactun on specific dates; however, in order to generate tourism traffic during the rest of the year, Uaxactun needed a promotional point at a mainstream destination such as Tikal. The official event for the presentation of the kiosk was attended by representatives of Uaxactun, INGUAT, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Tourism Chamber, FUNDESA, Asociación Balam and Counterpart.



Information kiosk recently awarded to the Uaxactun Community Tourism Association



Local media covered the ceremony where the information kiosk at Tikal National Park was awarded to the Uaxactun Community Tourism Association

V. Environmental Compliance

All of the activities implemented during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012 continue to fall under the Categorical Exclusion is issued to those activities involving technical assistance, training, analyses, studies, workshops, document transfers, and others that will not have an impact on the environment.

ANNEX 1.
DETAILED INDICATORS

ALIANZA PARA EL TURISMO COMUNITARIO -
USAID / COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL

FISCAL YEAR: 2012
QUARTER: 1 (October-December 2011)

PMP INDICATORS										
INCOME GENERATED	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
From tourism	803,862.95				803,862.95	2,000,000.00	14,365,912.55	13,013,786.43	13,817,649.38	98
From handicrafts	677,775.87				677,775.87	1,000,000.00	5,634,087.45	5,094,408.65	5,772,184.53	
Total	1,481,638.82	-	-	-	1,481,638.82	3,000,000.00	20,000,000.00	18,108,195.09	19,589,833.91	
New jobs created (full time jobs equivalents)	1 qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Men	43.82				44	2,580	8,700	5,261	5,353	62
Women	48.28				48					
Indigenous	63.33				63					
Non indigenous	28.78				29					
Total	92	0	0	0	92					
VISITORS	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Domestic visitors	42,964				42,964	130,000	675,430	720,053	772,935	114
International visitors	9,918				9,918					
TOTAL	52,882	-	-	-	52,882					
New SMEs created	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
New SMEs created	6				6	88	220	132	138	63
Credit allocated for tourism and handicrafts initiatives (US\$)	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Credit allocated	27,225.81				27,225.81	82,000.00	1,005,581.20	925,565.74	952,791.55	95
Total	27,225.81	-	-	-						

Strengthened organizations	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Logremos program beneficiaries (Petén)	46				46	220	1124	1145	1168	104
Logremos program beneficiaries (Sololá)	31				31					
Logremos program beneficiaries (Verapaces)	17				17					
Logremos and strengthening of CBOs in Western Highlands region	5				5					
Implementation of cleaner production - Sololá	13				13					
Implementation of cleaner production - Tikal	3				3					
Community-based tourism guides program	0				0					
Design and commercialization of handicraft products (sub award - AGEXPORT)	15				15					
Technical assistance and training program for handicrafts' sector SMEs (sub award - AGEXPORT)	61				61					
Implementation of environmental practices in rural communities.	0				0					
Incubation of new handicraft businesses (sub award - Comunidades de la Tierra)	0				0					
Strengthening of existing handicrafts producer groups (sub award - Comunidades de la tierra)	8				8					
New SMEs created	6				6					
TOTAL (currently receiving assistance)	205	0	0	0	205					
TOTAL PRODUCER GROUPS	69									
TOTAL NEW BENEFICIARIES INCORPORATED	23				23					

LEVERAGE (US\$)	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Total	161,294.77				161,294.77	1,002,000.00	8,572,000.00	7,570,956.02	7,732,250.79	90

COST SHARE (US\$)	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
	99,947.91				99,948	515,000.00	2,600,000.00	2,085,962.00	2,185,909.91	84

ETEO - SO2 / ECON GROWTH INDICATORS										
OP Indicators										
Program Element 6.2 Private Sector Productivity	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL FY 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Number of firms receiving USG assistance to improve their management practices	205	0	0	0	205	220	1,124	1145	1168	104
Number of SMEs receiving USG assistance to access bank loans or private equity	5				5	17	196	179	184	94
Number of public-private dialogue mechanisms utilized as a result of USG assistance.	4				4	4	4	4	4	100

Program Element 8.1 Natural Resources and Biodiversity	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL FY 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance	258	-	-	-	258	1,000	10,869	10,108	10,367	95
number of women	108				108	450	5,142	4,811	4,920	96
number of men	150				150	550	5,727	5,297	5,447	95
Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	143				143	750	7,210	6,591	6,734	93

Current PMP Indicators	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL FY 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Sales of goods and services as a result of USAID programs, in thousand \$	1,482	0	0	0	1,482	3,000	20,000.00	18,108	19,590	98
Number of jobs created as a result of USAID programs (full time jobs equivalents)	92	0	0	0	92	2,580	8,700	5,261	5,353	62

	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr	TOTAL FY 2012	FY 2012 Target	Project Global Target	FY 11 Accumulated total	Cumulative Total (Life of project)	% Accomplished
Number of Rural Households benefiting directly from USG interventions	401				401	2,000	13,372	13,744	14,146	106